

BLOWING IN THE WIND

NEWLETTER FOR SAILING AND DINGHY SECTIONS OF CYC

14-5-19

Upcoming Events

[Combined Dinghy & Keelboat Prize Night Saturday 18th May-7pm](#)

[Keelboats & Dinghies-Sunday 19th May- 2pm-Frostbite Race](#)

[Keelboats & Dinghies-Sunday 2nd June-2pm-Frostbite Race](#)

KEELBOAT NEWS

Combined Keelboat and Dinghy Prize Night-Saturday 18th May

Now that we have come to the end of the Summer Sailing season it is time now to see who the big winners are from this season at our annual Prize Night. So please make a note of Saturday 18th May for the big night of nights for both the Keelboats and Dinghy sections of the Club.

Menu for Prize Night-\$49.50

Anti Pasto platters with Turkish breads

Mains

Alternate drop

Sirloin Steak, with Bearnaise Sauce, potato mash and seasonal steamed vegetables

OR

Salmon, crisp baby potatoes tossed through lemon balm topped with salsa verde

Chefs selection petit fours served on stands centre of the table.

[Bookings through CYC Office-either by phone or email](#)

Listed below are the dates for the Winter Frostbite Series for members to notate in their diaries. They are run on the first and third Sunday of the month, starting at 2pm.

"WINTER "FROSTBITE" SERIES 2019"

19-May-19	SUN	1400	Winter Frostbite Race (combined Keelboat/Dinghy)
02-Jun-19	SUN	1400	Winter Frostbite Race (combined Keelboat/Dinghy)
16-Jun-19	SUN	1400	Winter Frostbite Race (combined Keelboat/Dinghy)
07-Jul-19	SUN	1400	Winter Frostbite Race (combined Keelboat/Dinghy)
21-Jul-19	SUN	1400	Winter Frostbite Race (combined Keelboat/Dinghy)
04-Aug-19	SUN	1400	Winter Frostbite Race (combined Keelboat/Dinghy)
18-Aug-19	SUN	1400	Winter Frostbite Race (combined Keelboat/Dinghy)
01-Sep-19	SUN	1400	Winter Frostbite Race (combined Keelboat/Dinghy)
15-Sep-19	SUN	1400	Winter Frostbite Race (combined Keelboat/Dinghy)

(note: all Winter Frostbite races only use twilight courses 15 and 16 - watch the flags)

Roster Reminders: Frostbite Starter:

Sunday 19th May: Robert Jeffery

Sunday 2nd June: Robert Jeffery

Sunday 16th June: Ann Caddick and Jacquie Hocking

THANK YOU



Without our volunteers we would not be able to go out and enjoy the sport that we love. So it is important to thank these people.

Thank You to our Duty Starters for :

Sunday 5th May: Ann Caddick and Jacquie Hocking for manning the Start Box for the Frostbite Race.

Huge Thank You to all our hardworking Starters, led by Robert Jeffery and Wilma Poland. Their team is: John and Sarah Steinhardt, Alan and Joan Austin, Colin and Margaret Cook and Andrew Caddick who all gave up some of their time on the weekends so we could go sailing.

Thanks also to the Sailing Committee members, led by RCS Richie Boykett. His team is: Robert Jeffery, Kevin Kiddey, Peter and Rob Boykett, Todd Whitfield and Wilma and Arthur Poland. These members attend monthly meetings to keep sailing going at CYC and are constantly trying to come up with interesting events for their sailors.

VIEW FROM THE POOP DECK (OF A STINK BOAT)

Howdy, well with a break from the role of chief wind stealer, I have been pretending to be a little stinker and been getting involved with the start of the time trial season. Last weekend Dawno and I headed off to South of Perth Yacht Club to shake hands and enjoy a glass of their bubbly. It was a glorious afternoon after the impending storms of the night before.



This weekend the Boykett Clan along with the pommy blow-ins Dawn and Karl headed out on the Lloyd Anderson to see the powerboats through the sail past. Everybody that made it down on Saturday was treated to a great display by a large pod of dolphins, including several calves, who jumped, slapped and bubbled for many hours leading up to the start. We had cameras flashing as a great turnout of big stinkers enjoyed some of the best autumnal weather you can wish for. The sailors were represented by the cruising cats on board Brahmini who after the salute then hoisted a sail and went off for a prowl.

Next weekend is the Sail and Dinghy Prize Night and I look forward to seeing you down at the club to remember the year past. The following day we have the second of the frostbites for the year (14:00 start) alongside our little buddies on the laser dinghies!

Until then, enjoy the beautiful autumn weather and the light breezes.

Fair Winds

RCS Richie Boykett

DINGHY NEWS

Winter Frostbite Series Dates listed above in Keelboat section

MIDNIGHT AT SEA

No moonlit night, this one. The tight circle of the masthead light fixes my yacht on the dark chaos of the waves surrounding it, a chaos that extends out of sight to the perimeter of the night sky. This is my world on the midnight sea. From beyond this patch, beyond this arc of light, comes only the illumination of the ever-friendly stars and a solitary, occulting little light, the masthead of a far-distant yacht. It ascends now and again from below the sea, climbing up in amongst the stars scattered low along the dull horizon. Then it is gone, dropped from sight, eclipsed once again by the ocean swell. It is growing dimmer. We are each locked on our chosen courses and our separation is insurmountable. The only gateway we have into each other's world lies in the reach of the equipment in the cabin below. But for my radio that other light may as well not exist.

Overhead, familiar constellations hold their autumn corners. Orion with his sword, Taurus and their neighbours lie west by north-west. The Southern Cross looks directly down on my stern with the pointers now vertical and to the east of south, a clue to my heading. There was haze around the horizon this afternoon but tonight visibility seems better, even if it isn't perfect. Some thin clouds condensed after sunset and these patches have persisted here and there. They are visible only in their darkness, by the black, nebulous veils they cast across the bright starfield.

I think back to the sunset. We had that expected out-at-sea evening discussion amongst our four crew, talk of green flashes, the atmospheric astronomical effect that is sometimes seen as the last segment of the sun's disc pinches off below the horizon, a refractive trick of light.

Of the countless, fruitless times over the years that I have paused to watch the last of the sun be swallowed by the ocean I had a feeling that this evening we might just be in luck. There was a dampness to the atmosphere and a look to the sea that reminded me of an evening almost three decades ago on the west coast of New Zealand's South Island. With two friends I had just completed a crossing of the Southern Alps on skis and taken the opportunity to catch up with an old mate from my Margaret River caving days, settled by then for part of each year at his little cliff-top house north of Greymouth. For Paul Caffyn, since become a world-renowned sea kayak circumnavigator, the green flash was evidently a routine thing. We were in the course of dinner at his table and the sun was setting through the glass that separated us from his sea-spray-soaked terrace. He led us out there to see a green flash so vivid I could almost have had time to pick up my camera and photograph it. And it turned out that I was right about our evening just gone but the heaving of the seas meant that only the three of us standing high in the cockpit saw the distinct flare of green just after the last of the gold had sunk into the depths. One keeps on buying tickets in this lottery, searching for the treasure, for just these elusive moments. Most satisfying for me is the confirmation that comes with a sighting by others in one's company, that green flashes are part of reality not just some doubtful, mythical effect I go on claiming to have witnessed.

My sails are now set wing and wing against the darkness, two white triangles under starlight flying either side of the towering mast. A following wind presses firmly against them, tensioning the fabric, the sheets and the rigging, driving my world forward. The ragged crests of the steep waves bearing down on me from a windswept, quartering sea toss haphazardly across their successive fronts. They rear up out of the darkness and cross one after the other into my circle of light.

Miraculously it seems, the yacht's stern rises to meet the oncoming wave then, in a brief burst of speed, the boat surges forward, surfing down the wave face, veering off and sending a wedge of white foam tumbling

away off my bow. It rolls and hisses into the blackness. As each wave overtakes me the wind-vane self-steering brings the yacht back on course just in time, always in time, for the rhythmic, rolling cycle to begin again. Thus, do the night hours pass.

My miniscule place on the vast ocean is by no means the confinement you may be imagining. Propelled only by the wind I am also doubly blinded by both a treacherously invisible distance to a horizon, one defined only by an end of stars, and by the absence of daylight to fill that void. It is just this abstract nature of being at sea on a dark night that sends the mind so easily to far distant places and admits thoughts impossible when it is pre-occupied, distracted by daylight images. Just as the waves emerge endlessly out of blackness so does the mind continuously bridge this apparent isolation by inexplicable pathways. For much of my midnight watch I am in two places at once.

And wonder at my yacht's immediate surroundings is not just about breaking waves and hissing foam. A snaking track of phosphorescence runs away behind, up and away over the oncoming waves. Skipping and dancing across the foam thrown out each side of the hull, cascading along this glowing, pale blue furrow are individual sparkles and flashes of phytoplanktonic brilliance, microscopic, short-lived supernovae of the sea. Is this a reward bestowed by nature for simply choosing to be out here, on her terms of course, and for the long hours of the solitary night watch? Is that all it takes to be worthy of such a scintillating, captivating display?

At the beam ends of my circle the spreading pressure wave from the hull meets small waves and pushes them up into unplanned peaks. They hover briefly at their maximum then collapse into patches of white foam. Beyond the limit of these decaying mounds of brightness, beyond my luminous circle, a fifty-metre-deep watery blackness grumbles away, irritated by an endlessly chiding wind, away to the edge of the night sky.

Does this invisible commotion, of wind and marching waves, of breaking crests, of energy and potential violence that can toss a small boat around like a cork, prey on the mind and fill it with dread? Awe is probably closer to the mark.

I chose to be the sailor, to go to sea in a small yacht. In my case, certainly, it was not a happy-go-lucky detour brought to urgent life from dreams of warm breezes, coral, white beaches, palm trees and an instability induced by a mid-life serving of accumulated lost time. Rather it was a calculated measure of preparation and increasing experience heavily tempered by a respect for nature's indifference. This is the west coast of Australia and there are precious few places to hide. What counts as just another summer sea breeze here is rated as a gale almost everywhere else.

And I have a quiet confidence in the strength of our yacht, in its seaworthiness and in the condition of its equipment. Then also in my ability and that of the crew to muster the fortitude and retain composure when deteriorating conditions come marching in over the horizon.

Now, suddenly, my eye is caught by a flash of light, an electrical discharge far away in the eastern blackness and presumably back over the sandy country rising behind the reef-strewn, corroded limestone coast. An Earthly window has swung briefly open, a view out beyond my capsule of navigation light. More flashes, and with them enters a little more colour, like some reverberation from the long-gone daylight hours come to invade this nocturnal, mostly monochrome existence. The back-lit cloud bank shows stains of off-whites and light-browns, maybe even a shade of purple, tell tales of smoke haze over the land perhaps. But this far off the coast the nose of burning eucalypt and acacia, of incinerated heathland or wheat stubble, has not been carried on the wind and mixed into the salt air sweeping across my decks. This is an autumn night. Smoke on the water belongs more with the firmly offshore easterlies of summer.

Until that flash of lightning I had been mostly looking ahead, now and then more widely for coastal shipping, yes, but mainly concentrating on the sails and my mast-top wind indicator. I was frequently confirming that the wind vane was adjusted just so as to avoid a mainsail gybe. But now I look up from the sporadic electrics caught by my eye, firing off to starboard. For the first time I notice Scorpio reclining on the soft surface of the charged,

distant but looming cloud bank. Antares with its reddish tinge is rising bright into the black night sky against a background sprinkled with myriad, pure-white, lesser magnitude stars. Then, quite unexpectedly, Jupiter bursts into clear view through an unseen break now opened in the cloud below. Its identity is unmistakable, given away by a brightness only bettered by Venus. Multiple flashes propagate again along the low horizon, then extinguish, and I am pulled back into my little circular world of waves and surging foam.

And what really of this isolation, you ask? I know that's what most of you with your feet sunk into the dust of the land are thinking – who would want to be out there, what do I do for the night - head in and tie up somewhere, surely not remain out to sea?

I can assure you now that such a retreat would be taking shelter from some of the best that life has to offer. There is a comfort, an intense satisfaction to be felt out here on the midnight sea, one I do not know from elsewhere. It lives partly in the joy that comes whenever simplicity is given full encouragement, when it is allowed to rise up and drown the endless complications of everyday life. I've said that often enough before. But tonight, even more so than in the desert, I feel strangely in control, alive on my own terms. Out here, unlike anywhere else, this is a trackless and traceless existence, a chain of broken links, of one moment, one wave after the other, an endless procession until dawn. As for the rest of the crew, they are asleep below. Their turn will come.

At this midnight hour, my life plays out within a small disc of light cast onto a vast dark stage. It is a stage seen only by starlight and upon which there is but one other actor. It is that actor alone who knows exactly my whereabouts at any time, who knows every hair on my head. I depend on him for my progress and we have long conversations about how I should set my sails and adjust my course. He is both friend and potential adversary, the master of the seas, demanding and constantly worthy of my respect. He ducks and weaves, strengthens and then feigns lifelessness. What can I do? I know the wind is playing with me and it is just that which makes it quite impossible to feel alone out here.

Ian Maley, April 2019

Please send articles to: annandrew@iinet.net.au

OR membership@claremontyachtclub.org.au

Please note articles need to reach Ann Caddick by Monday evening for your article to be included in that week's BIW. If you are sending them to the Office please try to do it by Monday otherwise send straight to AC. Thanks